TAFT TALK

No. 64 *Newsletter of the Taft Family Association* **Jun 2013**

A postcard from the past

Rosemary McLaren says her husband bought this postcard because of the Taft name.

The pharmacy featured was the Wike Pharmacy in Marietta, PA. The writing on the face of the postcard says "Do you know the fellow in the white coat?" Going on e-bay recently we found a clear mold-blown Albert D. Wike Pharmacy bottle from Marietta, PA in the 1800s. The man in the white coat was undoubtedly the pharmacist and probably Albert D. Wike himself.

Aunt Matie or "M" sent this card to her niece Ella R. Taft of Westfield, Tioga, PA around 1908.

(See p 8 for information on this Taft family.)

Rodney Hamer

Roy Henry sent us another engaging photograph. Roy is our man in Uxbridge and keeps us going with Taft memorabilia from the Uxbridge / Mendon area. This photo of Rodney Hamer was taken by his very good friend, Roy's father, when they were fishing sometime in the 1920s or 30s. What jogged Roy's memory about the photograph was our article last December in which Rodney's wife Dora Maria Taft was featured with her sister Pearl Elizabeth Taft (TTT #63).

Louise Plumley brings us up to date with her Pennsylvania family:

Louise's husband Bob has been in and out of the hospital and doing better now. She wonders where the time has gone and notes that even their grandson, Ryan, is 35. And Louise and Bob have just celebrated their 62nd anniversary. Congratulations!!

Her sister Janet Cary is not well and has also been in and out of the hospital, on oxygen all the time even though she never smoked. Sister Phyllis Potter's husband has also been having health problems. Paul, her brother is okay but his wife is ill.

In spite of illness and frailty, they are taking care of each other and are a very close-knit family. We always look forward to hearing from you, Louise, and trust this summer is gentle on all of you.

Maxine Postmus sends us a very interesting letter although it does bear sad tidings.

Maxine writes that her sister, Mrs. Paula Wilkinson, a member of the Taft Family Association, died 1 Apr 2012. She became interested in genealogy when she married W. Floyd Wilkinson after WW II. His employment was with a company in New England so they moved there. Floyd died in 1994 in Wilton, NH. Pauline "Paula" Van Ree and W. Floyd Wilkinson had one child: Ross Wilkinson.

Early on Paula interested Maxine in genealogy - that pastime that has ensnared so many of us - and she too became a member of the TFA.

Maxine D. Van Ree and her husband, Arthur John Postmus, were married in 1942 and shared 67 years of memories, before he died in 2009. They have four children: Julie Ellen Berens, David Frederick Postmus, Jeanie Sue Averill, and Philip Andrew Postmus. Maxine now lives in a retirement home in Grand Rapids, MI, where they moved in 2007. She is concerned though because her computer does not work as well as it should – we know what that is like!

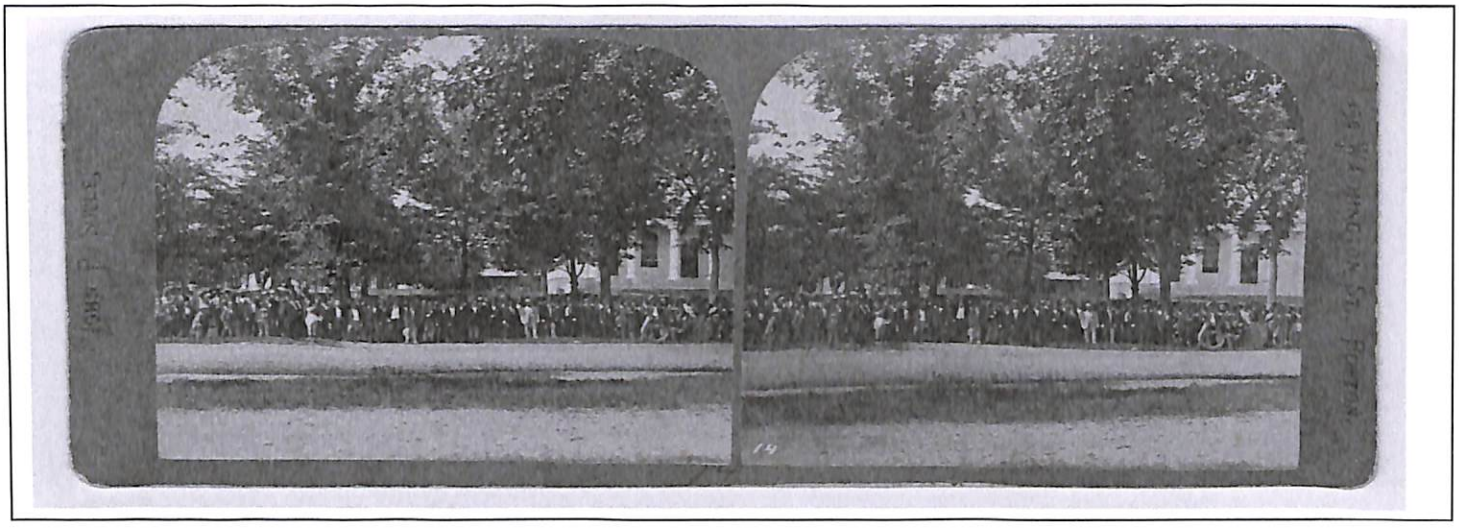
Maxine notes their Taft line comes through their maternal grandmother. Their parents were Johannis Hendrek Van Ree and Frances Idel Wolfe. Frances Idel Wolfe was the daughter of Charles Frederick Wolfe and Celestia Phebe Simkins (James Emerson Simkins and Mary L. Wiley, Julius J. Wiley and Phebe A. (Benjamin, Benjamin, Seth, Stephen, Benjamin, Robert) Taft).

Taft seeks new 92nd State Representative position

Larry Taft, son of Charles E. "Tater" Taft, is one of four in a Republican primary runoff seeking a spot in the Tennessee legislature. He retired as sports editor of the "Tennessean" newspaper and is taking up this new challenge.

While it is nice to have a Taft seeking political office once again, it turns out Larry is not related to us (unless perhaps if we some day find Robert Taft was born in Ireland). Larry's father Charles E. Taft was the son of Oliver P. (David McAnn, David) Taft. David McAnn Taft was born in South Carolina as was his mother, but his father David Taft immigrated from Ireland.

(Photo and article from "The Elk Valley Times" 21 Apr 2013)



1874 Taft Family Gathering on the Common by John P. Soule

Wren's Nest photos:
Photo to left: Tri-Counties Genealogy & History by Joyce M. Tice;
photo to right: C. R. Clarke of Tioga, PA

A Very Special Place to Spend a Night

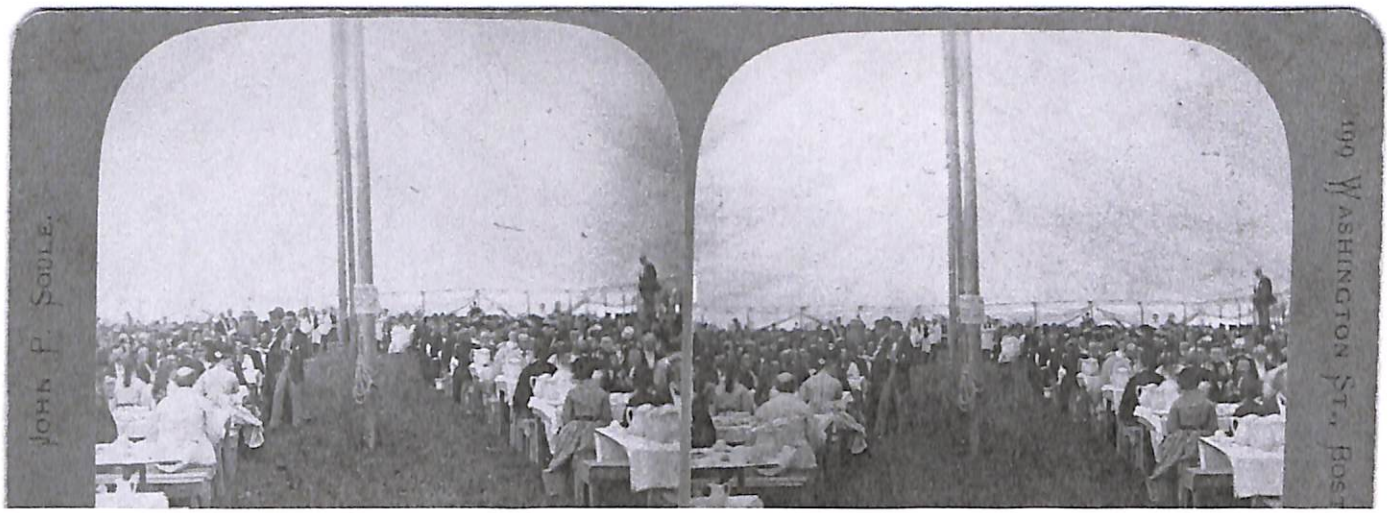
The following newspaper article was sent in by TFA member Louise Plumley:

President Taft once slept in 140 year old Mansfield house by C. R. Clarke

Tioga County has many historic homes, full of character and heritage. One of those homes, known as the Wren's Nest, is located in Mansfield. It overlooks the Tioga River, and is just across the bridge from Mansfield High School. Built in 1856 by Dr. Joseph P. Morris, the house was constructed on property sold to him by James R. Wilson for $12,000, having purchased it himself in a sheriff's sale from the Asa Mann holdings. In 1892 Dr. Morris died and Mrs. Morris lived in the Wren's Nest until her death in 1898. Her daughter Mrs. Charles (Catherine) F. Swan then lived there. The house is now occupied by a direct descendant of the Morris family, Louise "Peep" (Thompson) Walker. She has lived in the house since 1973 and also lived there with her parents and grandparents until she was 5.

The house was built from a plan in "Architecture of Country Houses" and has always been known as the "Wren's Nest." Described as a "symmetrical bracketed cottage," indoor plumbing was added in 1888 and the upstairs remodeled in 1898 with the addition of two bedrooms where a hallway known as the "Inland Passage" had been. Electricity and bathrooms were also added. A woodshed, now a back entryway, and ice house were located in the northwest wing. The house has five fireplaces. The home now has twenty rooms including laundry, kitchen, back pantry, dining room, two parlors, living room, seven bedrooms, four bathrooms, a woodshed and a garage, as well as the front porch, attic, and basement.

In the early part of the twentieth century Pres. William H. Taft visited the Mansfield Normal School and spent the night at the Wren's Nest, sometime during or immediately after his term as president. The four poster bed on which he slept is engraved with a brass plate that says "President William Howard Taft slept here."



1874 Taft Family Gathering inside the test by John P. Soule

In Memoriam

Long-time member, Betty Johns, regretfully informs us that her dynamic daughter, Beverly J. Cowles, died at a much too young age.

Beverly J. Cowles

Beverly J. Cowles, 61, of S. Chestnut St., Jefferson, OH, died early Thursday morning, 27 Sep 2012, at the Cleveland Clinic Foundation where she had been a patient the past month. Her ashes will be buried in the Oakdale Cemetery.

Beverly was born 27 Sep 1951 in Ashtabula, OH, the daughter of H. Edwin and Betty L. (Budd) Cowles.

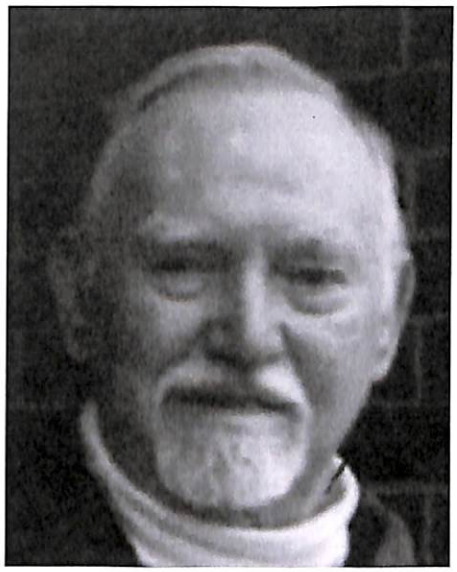
Beverly was a graduate of Jefferson Area High School and Ohio State University with an architectural degree. She worked in design for several years in New York before moving back to Jefferson. Besides being a licensed architect, Beverly co-owned Western Reserve Touring Co., doing business as Ohio Wine Tours and Lady Limo. She was a member and later Worthy Advisor in the Rainbow Girls; and a member of the Sunshine Chapter of the Order of Eastern Star. She belonged to various professional architectural organizations and was active with the Ashtabula County, Lake County and Geneva-on-the-Lake Visitors Bureaus. Beverly was affiliated with the Jefferson United Methodist Church. Her interests included playing the flute, photography and most recently learning the grape growing and wine producing industry.

Survivors include her mother, Betty L. Johns of Jefferson; a sister, Patricia L. Cowles of Ashtabula; a step-grandmother, Fannie Cowles of Ashtabula; and several aunts, uncles and cousins. She was preceded in death by her father, H. Edwin Cowles; her step-father, Harvey Johns; a sister, Mary, at birth; and her grandparents, Francis and Leona Budd, H. Russell Cowles, and Lillie Mae and John Iglai.

Beverly J. Cowles was the daughter of Betty L. Budd and Horace Edwin Cowles (Horace Russell Cowles, Lucien Benton Cowles, Horace F. Cowles, Lucien Cowles and Sophia (Perry, perhaps William, Paul, Benjamin, Robert) Taft.

(photo and obituary from Fleming & Billman Funeral Directors)

In Memoriam



Betty Carr informs us that her brother, Lloyd Clark Taft, has died. She said he was the last of her brothers. (By the way she was the baby in the family and the only girl – count them nine brothers: Jesse, Frederick, William, Jerald, Lloyd, Bobby, Howard, Otis, and baby Orvle!!) As the youngest, Betty just had an 80-year-young surprise birthday party – so congratulations to Betty even though we must lament the passing of her brother.

Lloyd Clark Taft, loving father and grandfather, of Davison (MI), age 90, passed away Friday, 9 Nov 2012 at Genesys Hospice Care Center of Goodrich. He was buried on Monday 12 Nov 2012 with military honors in St. John Catholic Cemetery.

Lloyd Taft was born in Flint, MI on 20 Sep 1922, son of the late Orvle and Lily (Jankowske) Taft. He married 6 Jan 1951 Pearl Kaczmarek and she preceded him in death on 22 Mar 1994. Lloyd proudly served his country in the U.S. Navy for 14 years on PT Boats during WWII and the Korean Conflict. He was a tool and die maker for AC Spark Plug for 42 years. Lloyd was a member of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church and helped with funeral luncheons. He enjoyed building birdhouses in his wood shop and sharing them with friends.

Lloyd Clark Taft (photo by www.allenfuneralhomeinc.com

Lloyd Taft is survived by his children, Cathy (fiancé, Dale Becker), Barbara (Louis) Behrends, Denise (fiancé, Dennis Woody); grandchildren, Nick, Mitchell, Todd, Laura and Elizabeth Behrends; sister, Betty (Charles) Carr; many nieces and nephews; and his loyal companions, Murphy and Clancy.

Lloyd Clark Taft was the son of Lily Anna Elsie (Jankowske) and Orvle Jesse R. (Jesse Prince, Ethan Arthur, Jesse, Mijamin Mowry, Nathan, Mijamin, Benjamin, Robert) Taft.

The BIG Store and the Tafts... more or less

Edwin G. Taft sent this photo and says the store has never had anything to do with Tafts, and the letters "TAFT" are an acronym for **T**o **A**lbany **F**rom **T**roy. See p. 9 and Jeff Eaton's variation on a theme. The competition begins....

Meanwhile Edwin Taft has corresponded with Neil over the years concerning his central NY Taft ancestors. He is in the Robert line via Niles N., Frank Niles, Emery, Proctor, Timothy, Asa, Gideon, Robert and Robert Taft and is able to trace Asa from Wendell to Westmoreland and Kirkland, Oneida, NY. Timothy, Proctor, Emery and Frank are all buried in one of the two Kirkland cemeteries.

Edwin is planning a trip to the Mendon –Uxbridge area this spring or summer. We sent him some more information on the earlier generations which will hopefully help him on his visit.

Which Robert Taft is which?

Barbara Reisenauer Smith, a relative of Beth Klumb, and both very helpful, involved TFA members, sent a very thorough writeup of her Taft line through Robert, Robert, Israel.... and then who? Barbara said she is happy to lose the Captain label, because she has an attraction to Hannah Coggeshall and would rather keep her as her ancestor than have another Captain in the family. She also notes "This is why I bemoan the fact that there was such a lack of ingenuity when baby boys were named so long ago...."

Barbara is descended from Robert and Hannah (Coggeshall) Taft and she noted it was all verified by the DAR which indicateed that Capt. Robert Taft married Hannah Coggeshall.

There are only two Robert Tafts at issue here. One was the Robert (M) Taft born abt 1724, the son of Matthew and Anne (Quintain) Taft. The second was Robert (R) Taft born 14 Feb 1729/30 in Mendon, MA (VR 176), son of Israel and Mercy (Aldrich) Taft.

1. Capt. Robert (M) Taft, born abt 1724 and died 12 Nov 1810 in Upton, MA, aged 86 yrs (VR 181), married (1) 25 Apr 1750 in Walpole, MA (VR 111, 177) Jane Crage / Creag (she died 8 Dec 1793 in Upton, MA in her 71st yr., wife of Capt. Robert Taft (VR 181); and he married 2d 10 May 1795 Mrs. Mary Whitney in Upton, MA, the wife of Capt. Robert Taft (VR 135 int). Capt. Robert and Jane (Crage) Taft had seven children born between 1751 and 1763, all listed in Vital Records as children of Robert and Jane: Ebenezer, Solomon, Hannah, Robert, Elizabeth "Betsey", Eunice, and Lois Taft. The Taft MSS 1910 lists Capt. Robert as the son of Matthew and Anne (Quintain) Taft.

2. Robert (R) Taft, born 14 Feb 1729/1730 in Mendon, MA, son of Israel and Mercy (Aldrich) Taft (VR 176) and died abt 1786 in East Greenwich, RI, married 9 Jan 1755 Hannah Coggeshall in East Greenwich, RI (VRRI 2.5). Robert and Hannah (Coggeshall) Taft had four children born between 1755 and 1770, all listed in Vital Records as children of Robert and Hannah: George, Mercy, Mary, and Elizabeth Taft. The DAR Patriot Index lists this Robert Taft as Capt. Robert Taft son of Israel Taft who married Jane Crage and Mrs. Mary Whitney.

Vital Records for Upton are clear that Capt. Robert Taft and his two wives, Jane and Mary, were buried there and are labeled in death records each as "wife of Capt. Robert". His death record states he died in 1810 at the age of "about 86 yrs" which would make his birth about 1724. This Robert Taft lived and died in Upton, MA as did his father Matthew Taft.

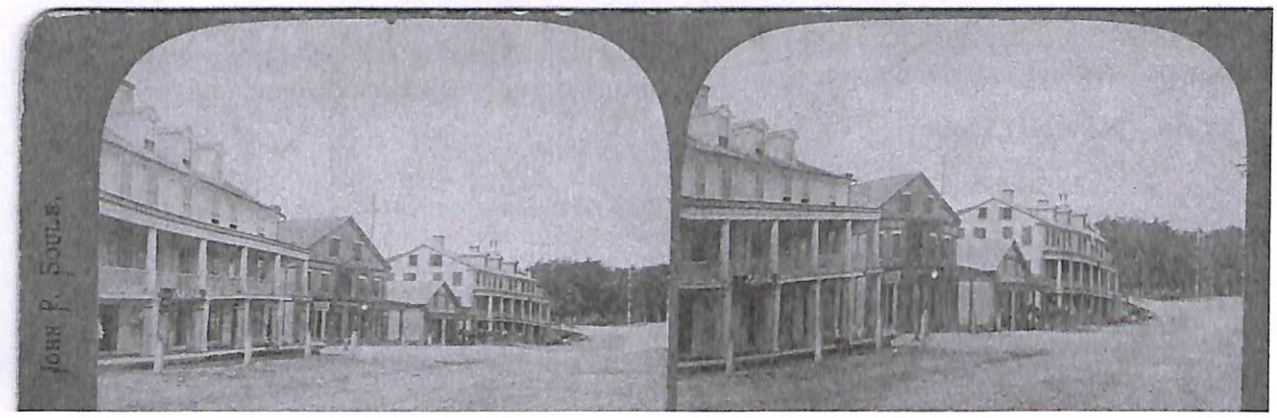
Vital Records for Mendon just as clearly show that Robert Taft born in 1729/1730 was the son of Israel Taft. The Arnold Records for East Greenwich, RI 2.5 indicate that Hannah Coggeshall married a Robert Taft of Warwick in 1755. Their children were born in East Greenwich, RI. This Robert Taft lived in Rhode Island. The confusion seems to come because Israel Taft in his will of 1753 is styled as gentleman of Upton (Worcester Co. Prob. 579901) in which he states he has already disposed to each of his other children, including Robert Taft, thus there is no indication of where Robert was living or his wife's name to prove it is the same Robert.

There is no will found yet for Matthew Taft nor for either Robert Taft. There probably are deeds that would make this quickly clear, but to date they have not been researched. Since Robert Taft (M) married in 1750 and his wife didn't die until 1793, and there has been no indication of any divorce; he could not be the Robert who married in 1755. Both Roberts had children whose births overlap in years, so that eliminates the possibility that one Robert married both Jane and Hannah.

Capt. Robert (M) Taft served in the Revolutionary War (DAR Index):

> "Taft, Robert, Upton. Captain of a company in Col. Silas Wheelock's Regt. which marched on the alarm of April 19, 1775 to Roxbury; service 8 days; also, Captain; return of men who enlisted Aug. 21, 1777 on the alarm caused by the battle of Bennington [service not given]; also, Captain, 3rd co. Col N. Tyler's (3d Worcester Co) Regt. of Mass militia; list of officers; commissioned Oct.22, 1779."

At the very least Capt. Robert Taft of Revolutionary War service is the son of Matthew Taft, not Israel Taft. It would appear that the DAR Index is incorrect. Perhaps whoever did the research did not know about a second Robert Taft in the area, particularly since Matthew didn't arrive until much later than the original Robert Taft. With all the repetition of given names, it becomes even more confusing.



1874 business view of Main St., Uxbridge by John P. Soule

In Memoriam

Pam Selwood King sent us the sad news of the passing of her mother, Ellen Louise (Messinger) Selwood. She noted that her mother passed away at her home in Pembroke, ME following a lengthy struggle with Alzheimers. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family.

Ellen Selwood (photo www.maysfuneralhome.com)

Ellen Louise (Messinger) Selwood

Ellen Selwood died Saturday, 3 Nov 2012 with her children at her side at her home in Pembroke, ME. She was buried in the Leland Cemetery, Perry, ME. Ellen was born 4 Dec 1921 in Worcester, MA, the daughter of the late Adin and Mabel (Taft) Messinger. She graduated from Hartford High School in Hartford, CT and worked as a waitress for G. Fox Stores in CT until marrying Merrill Selwood on 13 Jun 1943 in Mendon, MA.

While Merrill was serving his country during WWII, Ellen worked as a radio assembler in Chicago, IL for a government contractor. They returned to CT where they began their family. They eventually moved to Weymouth, MA where Ellen was an active member at the Pilgrim Congregational Church in North Weymouth. She was a teacher with the church's nursery school program and a member of the Mr. & Mrs. Club at the church. While her children were young, Ellen was also involved with the Bluebirds and Cub Scouts. She enjoyed cooking, gardening, sewing and quilting. Her most cherished moments were those times spent with her family, especially her grandchildren.

Ellen was predeceased by her loving husband, Merrill, in 2002; two brothers Richard (TFA editor for many years) and Ernest Messinger; and a special aunt, Beatrice Taft Pickard. Surviving are her two children, Pamela King (James) of Carver, MA; and Russell Selwood of Perry; a sister, Ruth Gilman of Bristol, CT; three grandchildren, Brian King (Michelle) of Carver, MA, Darren King (Michelle) of Carver, MA, and Amanda Ellen King of Marshfield, MA; five great-grandchildren, Daniell, Holli, Jacob, Nathan and Isabella King; and many nieces and nephews.

Ellen Louise (Messinger) Selwood was the daughter of Adin Freeman Messinger and Mabel Moore (George Mather, Austin Augustus, Amariah, Jotham, Caleb, Daniel, Robert) Taft.

If your label reads 2009, you will no longer receive this newsletter. Please contact our treasurer right away, so you don't miss the next newsletter. Thank you.

In Memoriam

Donald E. Taft of Jefferson, OH asked us to add his great-niece to the TFA and also informed us of the passing of a very accomplished cousin who touched many lives.

Mary (Newell) Case

Mary (Newell) Case, age 77, of Cortland, passed away Saturday 20 Oct 2012 at Hospice House in Poland, OH. Mary was born 10 Jun 1935 in Onondaga Co., NY, the only daughter of Mahlon and Gladys (Hilliard) Newell. She was also raised by her aunt and uncle, Fred and Evelyn Hilliard. She graduated from St. Petersburg, FL High school in 1953, and from Brevard Junior College, Brevard, NC and from Scaritt College for Christian Workers in Nashville, TN with a degree in Christian Education. While at Brevard, she was editor of the school newspaper and while at Scaritt she served as the first female president of the Inter-seminary Movement for Kentucky and Tennessee. Mary worked as a director of Christian Education in Bowling Green Methodist Church and Kent United Methodist Church. She worked part time during the years free-lance writing, curriculum writing, as a Welcome Wagon Hostess for Cortland, substitute teacher, and correspondent for the Youngstown Vindicator and Cortland Home News. Mary compiled and wrote a book "Cortland Remembered" for the Bazetta-Cortland Historical Society of which she and Sid were charter members. She worked part time from 1977-1983 as a Public Relations person for Lakeview Schools. Mary drove Mobile Meals for over 20 years, and was a member of Junior Crafts, AAUW, PEO, Friends of the Library, Fortnightly Study Club, Cortland Literary Club, Upton Association and numerous church organizations. She was a member of the Howland United Methodist Church and also owner and operator of Pieces of Yesterday.

Mary is survived by her husband of 51 years, H. Sidney Case; two sons, Brian (Kim) Case of New Cumberland, PA and Steve (Becky) Case of Oviedo, FL; three grandchildren, Aprille (John Metcalf) Case and Eric and Wyatt Case; half brother, Sam (Kathy) Newell; and aunt, Elsie Hilliard. She was buried at the Hillside Cemetery in Bazetta.

H. Sidney "Sid" Case was the son of Maynard C. Case and Lorena E. (Loren Elmer, Clark Corbin, Adolphus, Timothy, Timothy, Jacob, Israel, Robert, Robert) Taft.

(photo and obituary from the "Star Beacon" 22 Oct 2012)

Dear Ella,

Does this look natural to you? How do you like your new home and place by now. Thank your folks for the babys pictures. They are as cute as can be and so is he. Frank is playing a solo in church tonight. Aunt Susie is here and was half sick all the week had the doctor come a week ago today. Love to all from all.
Aunt Matie
I miss you as I have no one to go the moving pictures with me. Come down and go with me. ...

(cont. from p. 1

The writer of the postcard, Aunt Matie, was Mary Ellen "Matie" Taft b 5 Feb 1867 IL and died 31 May 1946 in Marietta, PA, the daughter of Rhobie Seeley and Asa Delos (John Whitney, Asa, Silas, Stephen, Benjamin, Robert) Taft. She married 6 Apr 1886 Charles McCloskey in Academy Corners, Tioga, PA. They had three children: Frank H., Rhobie H., and Mary McCloskey.

"Susie" was Susan Samantha Taft born 17 Apr 1860 IL and died 29 Feb 1920 in Lancaster, PA, sister of Mary Ellen Taft. She married 5 Jan 1886 John L. Purple in Academy Corners, PA.

The recipient of the postcard, Ella R. Taft was born 13 Apr 1887 in Academy Corners, PA and died 22 May 1972 in Sayre, PA, the daughter of Effie Masten and Isaac Cyrene Taft who was the son of Rhobie Seeley and Asa Delos Taft. She married after 1908 Fred C. Weeks.

Asa Delos and Rhobie (Seeley) Taft had nine children: Eddie Delos, Josephine Edna, Susan Samantha, Isaac Cyrene, Mary Ellen, Lena Pearl, Beulah, Mildred C., and Evelyn Taft.

Communications from our members with many thanks:

Claudine B. (Taft) Kitts writes that she is sending two years dues "since I suspect I'll not be around by the end of that time. It's been a great life I have no regrets." But hold on – we hope that won't be true and we have certainly enjoyed your company and information.

Connie Roe sent in her dues and a renewal for someone who might be having difficulty. What a lovely idea and, yes, we did find someone who was very appreciative.

Betty Taft Zager added her daughter Deborah Blackford to our mailing list. Thank you and welcome to Deb.

Sylvia Forsmith sent in a bit extra with her dues – calling it a late fee. We're just glad you still want to be with us.

Jeff Eaton says thank you for doing this (Taft work) and adds : **T**hat's **A**ll **F**or **T**oday! We expect more acronyms in the future… but you do have competition, see p 5.

Norma Winters writes to thank us for our efforts – and we thank you also for your continuing interest.

Ross Wilkinson sends us notice that his mother, Paula Wilkinson passed away 1 Apr 2012 (see p. 2). She and Ross attended our Reunions years ago. Please send us more information.

As Greg Square told Becky Grothe, the gravestones for Perry and Lucy Taft are in a small cemetery in Harpersfield, OH. He is planning on putting them on Find A Grave (probably already has). By the way that is a wonderful site; and every one of us who adds our town's cemeteries, helps someone else find their ancestors.

New member, Susan Taft Marcus-Mendoza, is a Joseph descendant and is interested in helping us do some research. Looking forward to the help.

Earl Boughton sent us a couple more photos to go with the ones of Estella Taft Boughton, his great-grandmother, who was featured in our Dec. 2012 (#63) newsletter. Thank you – we will find a good home for them. He also sends transcriptions from the Penn Line Cemetery, Linesville, PA for Tafts in the Matthew line:

1. Stone:	Clair Taft	1895-1942
	Florence E. Taft	1903-1979
	Richard Taft	1930-1932
2. Stone:	Gerald E. Taft, US Army, WW II, Korea	3 Aug 1927 – 9 Sep 2006
3. Stone:	Norman L. Taft,	16 Apr 1932 – 12 Jul 2000
	Charlotte S. Taft	16 Apr 1939 – 19 Sep 2003

The magazine "American Profile (2/2/13) asked a question about Jeanne Cooper's book "Not Young, Still Restless"

The answer said that Cooper, 84, had no plans to retire from her role as Katherine Chancellor on "The Young and the Restless" and that the Emmy-award winning actress was born in Taft, CA. We have heard of Taft, CA, haven't we!

We would love to hear from you – photos, stories, you name it, we are interested.

And better yet how about writing an article for this newsletter – no financial reward but lots of good will!

Taft Family Association Officers

President: still searching
Vice President & Genealogist: Neil B. Todd, 26 Walnut Place, Newtonville, MA 02460 neilbtodd@cs.com
Secretary/Treasurer: Pat Allen, 77 Greenfield Rd. , Montague, MA 01351; patallen7@verizon.net
Newsletter Editor: Pat Allen, 77 Greenfield Rd., Montague, MA 01351 patallen7@verizon.net
Website Editor: David W. Taft, Alpharetta, GA http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~taft/
Executive Committee: Berneta DeVries, Robert Curtis, Justin Taft, Charles F. Davis Jr., Sally Gagne, Wendy Cadieux

Annual dues of $8 per family are due and payable each year on or before June.
(Your dues are paid through the year on your mailing label.)